

REMARKS

Claims 1-54 are pending in this Application. Claims 10-41 and 54 are allowed. By this Amendment, Claims 1, 5, 43, 44 and 48 are been amended, wherein Claims 1 and 43 have been amended to include allowable subject matter, as indicated by Examiner's conditional allowance of Claims 4 and 42. Claims 4, 42 and 51-53 (previously restricted claims) have been canceled. Therefore, Claims 1-3, 5-41, 43-50 and 54 are at issue in this Application.

I. Allowable & Amended Claims

On page two of the Office Action, Examiner indicated that dependent Claims 4-6, 8, 9, 43, 46, 47, 49 and 50 would be allowable if re-written in independent form. Consistent with the Examiner's indication, Applicants have amended independent Claim 1 to include the allowable subject matter of dependent Claim 4. Also, Applicants have canceled Claim 4 and amended dependent Claim 5 to depend from Claim 1. Accordingly, Claims 1-3 and 5-9 are allowable according to the Examiners' indications.

Similarly, Applicants have also rewritten allowable dependent Claim 43 in independent form, including all limitations of the base claim (independent Claim 42). Applicants thereby canceled Claim 42, and have amended dependent Claim 44 to depend from Claim 43. Further, Applicants amended dependent Claim 48 to resolve the Section 112 Rejection. Therefore, Claims 43-50 are all in condition for allowance.

II. Anticipation Rejections

Due to amendment of Claim 1 and Claim 43, Examiners' rejections of Claims 2-3, 7, and 44-45 are rendered moot.

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As outlined above, Applicants have amended claim independent Claim 1, from which Claims 2, 3 and 7 depend, to include the allowable subject matter indicated by Examiner. Similarly, Applicant's amendment of Claim 43, and amendment of Claims 44-45 to now depend from amended Claim 43, results in all of these claims to now be in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believes the application is in a condition for allowance, and respectfully requests early notice of same. Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned attorney if the Examiner has any questions concerning this Response, or if it will expedite the progress of this Application.

Respectfully submitted,

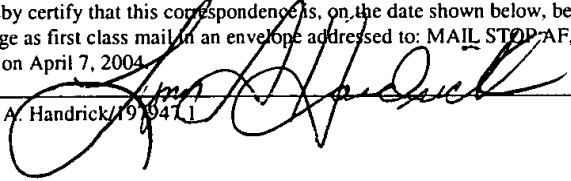
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is, on the date shown below, being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: MAIL STOP AF, Commissioner For Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on April 7, 2004.


Lynn A. Handrick/1919471